



Firewise West Virginia - 2005

Program Offers Tips To Protect Forest Homes

Firewise West Virginia is designed to help reduce the chances of losing a home to wildland fire. The program targets individual homes and communities in high-risk wildland/urban interface areas and offers assistance in developing wildfire plans aimed at lessening loss of property. This pilot program focuses on counties that have shown growth in population and/or an increase in homes built in the interface. The program is active in the Eastern Panhandle, Snowshoe Mountain, and Canaan Valley areas. The program is being introduced in Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral, Morgan, Pendleton, Pocahontas, and Tucker counties. Once established, the program will gradually expand statewide.



The goal is to encourage residents in higher wildfire risk areas to adopt Firewise concepts and promote overall fire safety in their communities.

The West Virginia Division of Forestry is working on:

- **Public Awareness**
The Firewise West Virginia public awareness campaign informs residents how they can make their homes safer and more likely to survive a wildfire. By adopting Firewise principles in landscaping, property maintenance, and construction, a home's economic and aesthetic values may be increased.
- **Risk Assessment**
The program provides wildfire risk assessments for individual homes or entire communities. This analysis looks at common risk factors and assigns a hazard rating based on wildfire threat. Recommendations are then made to reduce the risk.
- **Training**
The Firewise West Virginia program also involves training for suppression personnel. Training in risk assessment procedures, basic wildfire suppression, and wildland/urban interface tactics will give firefighters an edge in the battle against wildfires in woodland communities.

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